

down the road. But that is the way it is.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, would the leader yield for a question?

Mr. REID. I would be happy to yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I know the distinguished majority leader has been working very hard to accommodate Senators in a vote. I know he has the support of every member of our caucus in doing that. I believe I heard the distinguished leader say we will come in at 10.

Mr. REID. Yes. If I thought it would help to come in earlier, I would do that. But it would only be—

Mr. LEAHY. The Senator anticipated my next question. I appreciate that.

Mr. REID. We likely cannot do anything until the House votes on the bill tomorrow. We are trying to work through that. I have to say, the House has been extremely cooperative in everything we have done the last few days. I see on the floor my friend, the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. She knows how hard this has been and how cooperative the Republicans have been. No one has been more so than the ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, JIM INHOFE. I will always admire JIM INHOFE for the manner in which he approached this important piece of legislation. We pass out accolades on this floor, about everyone, how hard they work, but we would not be able to get this bill done except for JIM INHOFE. Fact.

So I am disappointed we cannot do this tonight. As the chairman of the Judiciary Committee just said, we would stay here tonight on our side until the wee hours of the morning, because we have some things to do. I was scheduled to be in Lake Tahoe tomorrow, but I can't be there. Other people have certainly more important trips than that. But it is one of the issues we have to face with these jobs we have, which are a tremendous privilege, but sometimes we do not have the ability, as a Governor does or the President does, a member of the Court does, to say: This is the schedule. There are 100 different leaders here, each thinking they have the best way of solving the problems of the world, and it takes a while sometimes to work through their opinions.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. DURBIN. I rise today to celebrate a major milestone for Illinois and

the nation. One hundred and fifty years ago on July 11, 1862, Illinois' own President Lincoln signed an Act of Congress that established the Rock Island Arsenal.

Rock Island started out during the Civil War as a small Union prisoner of war camp which also held and distributed supplies. It has grown into a critical manufacturer of 21st century supplies for our troops in the field. And in doing so, it also serves as the lifeblood of the Quad Cities region that hosts it.

In celebration of its 150th anniversary, I would like to highlight Rock Island Arsenal's impressive history and the impact it has had on the community and the nation.

Rock Island has a long history of producing supplies for our military. It was rifle cartridges and siege howitzers in the Spanish-American War of 1898. In World War I, it was rifles and a variety of personal equipment. By World War II, the Arsenal's emphasis had shifted to artillery production, and workers increased production from 75 artillery cartridges a year to 600 a month during the war. This ability to rise to the challenge for our servicemembers is a theme at Rock Island.

Products weren't the only thing changing at the Arsenal. So were demographics. Everyone is familiar with the image of Rosie the Riveter, as women stepped into the workforce. The Arsenal was no different—32 percent of the workforce was female during World War II.

Yet some of the workers were only teenagers. Squeezing in 40 hours of work while going to school, students were picked up after class and bused to the island. They worked Saturdays too. In a not uncommon story, Arsenal worker Anna Mae said her wartime effort was a family affair. "My mom worked on one side of the island, my stepdad on the other and I was in the middle."

Years after the war ended, Anna Mae returned to work at the Arsenal until retirement. When she learned that her war efforts contributed to her pension, she articulated the selflessness of so many when she said, "I never would have thought (about) that—we were just trying to win a war."

In the Korean War/Conflict, the sense of urgency on the island returned. Crews worked 10-hour days, 6 days a week, and sometimes on Sunday to get weapons and equipment shipped out. For Vietnam, the Arsenal created new products designed to counteract the Viet Cong's guerilla "hit and run" tactics, such as the M102 lightweight howitzer. The Arsenal continued to contribute to systems that meant life or death for the soldiers for the 1991 Gulf War—and then adapted as the military went through a drawdown after the war ended.

But as we all know, that peace did not last long. A little more than 10 years ago, the attacks of September 11th changed our world—and the nation again found itself at war. Again to

their credit, the Arsenal workforce went into overdrive to provide our troops what they needed. Machinist Jeff Roberts recalled, "Everyone's mentality is it's one collaborative effort to get the soldiers what they need as fast as you can."

They did—in a unique way. The Arsenal has the Department of Defense's only vertically integrated metal manufacturing capability. It has the only remaining foundry in the U.S. Army. It means that raw materials can go in one side and come out the other as very intricate finished products. It does this with a number of materials, including stainless steel, carbon steels, and titanium. The result—new equipment to better protect our troops, especially on short notice.

We all know how devastating improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were to U.S. troops in Iraq and continue to be to servicemembers in Afghanistan. In 2006 and 2007, our nation had fallen short in armor kits for Humvees and other ground vehicles to protect our troops. I urged then-Secretary Gates to use Rock Island's production capability to get these kits to our troops faster. Secretary Gates agreed. Rock Island became the single largest producer of these armor kits. Talk about saving lives.

Lieutenant General Raymond Mason, Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, recently noted, "It was critical that we had (the organic industrial base), along with our manufacturing capabilities at our arsenals at Watervliet, Rock Island and Pine Bluff. This allowed us to expand for wartime demand . . . " He also added, "By ensuring we maintain a core level of work, we then retain expandability capabilities if something else happens in the world."

As I look to the future, I would say that is exactly what we are doing at Rock Island. Earlier this year, I introduced the Army Arsenal Strategic Workload Enhancement Act of 2012, with the support of Senator MARK KIRK, Senator GRASSLEY, Senator HARKIN, and the Senators from New York and Arkansas.

The bill does just what General Mason was describing. It would create a strategic plan to ensure arsenals receive the workload they need to keep workers' skills sharp for whatever the future may hold.

We worked with Senator LEVIN and Senator MCCAIN on this. I was pleased that major portions of our bill were included in the report accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act, which was voted out of the Armed Services Committee last month.

But the Arsenal isn't complacent. They are partnering with private industry interested in working with titanium and other lightweight metals at the Quad-City Manufacturing Lab which opened in 2010. In these times of tough budget decisions, these partnerships enable Rock Island to sustain itself at no cost to the government